

By "CHILTERN"

### Wycombe Wanderers 1, Bedford Town 1

**W**YCOMBE WANDERERS deserved more than Wednesday's replay. Even though they only equalised five minutes from the end, they had the better of the Southern Leaguers in this F.A. Cup first round tie. And had Bedford hung on to their precarious one-goal lead and gone straight through to the second round it would have been the biggest football injustice of the year.

Wanderers controlled 70 per cent of the play and had less than a fair share of the luck. But for 8,000 spectators (including members) it was a real mouth-drier.

Wycombe's main fear was that their defence, which has been shaky in recent matches, would not be able to hold Bedford's experienced forwards, most of whom have served with Football League sides.

Yet the fans need not have worried, for the defence withstood the pressure magnificently, and the much-maligned Peter Roystone played a stormer at left-back.

With this solidarity behind them, Wanderers' forwards were able to concentrate on the job in hand, and what a peppering they gave the Bedford goalmouth. In the first minute Wycombe almost took a shock lead, but Horseman's header was inches wide. Then Collier was lucky to find himself in the path of a Roystone free-kick when unsighted.

#### SPECTACULAR

Although John Maskell was called on to make some spectacular saves—one in particular when he soared across the goal horizontally to catch a fierce shot from Benning — Wycombe created more openings.

In one goalmouth tangle Horse-

man had a shot blocked and then was unable to get his boot to the rebound which bounced tantalisingly away from him as the spectators held their breath.

Then Bates went through, and with only Collier to beat he pushed the ball that bit too far . . . and Samuels' first-time swivel shot shaved a post.

What a game it was! It was cup-football in the realest sense of the word. It was hard, with no quarter given — nor asked for.

Skipper Paul Bates laid on the move of the match half-way through the second-half. Beating his man he shrewdly placed the ball through the Bedford defence for Les Merrick to chase. Les caught it, outstripped his would-be tacklers and loosed a terrific first-time left-foot drive which beat Collier all ends up only to smash against the crossbar and bounce clear.

Wycombe's luck continued to balance against them when in the 67th minute Maskell made his only mistake in failing to gather the loose ball in a scramble, and Ron Fogg gratefully netted from close in.

Wanderers threw everything they had at Bedford. Len Worley bewildered full-back Skinn as he had done throughout, but his pinpoint centres came to nothing.

Then, with just five minutes to go, Bates put Merrick away again. He, beat Morgan, crossed, and there was Samuels to head it in.

Worley was Wycombe's outstanding forward. All the defence showed well — particularly Roystone. For Bedford, former Hearts' schemer Danny Paton was a constant threat, and their whole forward line was always ready to shoot — hard.

Wycombe: Maskell; Beck, Roystone; Baker, Rundle, Gale; Worley, Samuels, Bates, Horseman, Merrick.

Bedford: Collier; Morgan, Skinn; Willis, Collins, Corbett; Sturrock, Paton, Fogg, Cooley, Benning.